

MEETING SUMMARY**CH2M HILL**

TO: Sean Coyle, IDOT Dist #4
David Kastendick, IDOT Dist #6
Dennis Johnson, FHWA

COPIES: File

FROM: Larry D. Martin, CH2M HILL
Jim Saag, CH2M HILL

DATE: May 6, 1996

SUBJECT: Interagency meeting regarding the Eastern Ring Road MIS for the Peoria Metro Area and US 67 between Macomb and Jacksonville

PROJECT: 104310.T9.ZZ

On April 30, 1996, an interagency group (see attached sign-in sheet) gathered to discuss several transportation projects relative to the Concurrent NEPA/404 process. Two projects on the agenda included the Eastern Ring Road MIS and US 67 improvements between Macomb and Jacksonville, Illinois. The meeting started with a brief discussion from Dennis Johnson of FHWA describing the NEPA/404 merger process. Mr. Johnson explained that the merger process was designed to involve the key agencies early in the process and avoid possible oversights late in the process. He explained that there would be three concurrence points: 1) purpose and need, 2) alternatives to be studied in detail, and 3) selection of the preferred alternative. He also explained that following each concurrence point there would be a 30 day review and acceptance period. Further, Mr. Johnson mentioned that the process provides resource agencies with the opportunity to change their views if new information is presented at a later date. Following Mr. Johnson's comments the meeting began with a discussion of the the Eastern Ring Road MIS.

The Eastern Ring Road MIS was brought before the interagency group to receive concurrence on the project Purpose and Need. Representatives of CH2M HILL were asked to give a brief overview of the history of the ring road concept and the MIS study process. The MIS study concluded that the ring road is the only transportation strategy that would satisfy the mobility issues in the eastern metro area. Although, other alternative strategies have merit they do not by themselves or in combination provide the level of improvement required to reduce future congestion and improve mobility.

The interagency group explored several questions concerning the conclusions of the MIS. John Betker of the COE asked if the travel forecasts could be expanded upon. Jim Saag provided further information on ring road travel forecasts and trends in north - south travel. John also asked that the range of environmental effects be characterized for the different alternatives. Larry Martin provided an overview of the resource impacts. Charles Perino of IDOT asked if alternative bridge crossings at the Illinois River had been considered. Paula Green explained that the bridge location was influenced by the location of IL.6, and she also

MEMORANDUM

Page 2

May 6, 1996

104310.T9.ZZ

mentioned that at least two alternative bridge locations had been studied in the crossing area. Mike MacMullen of USEPA asked that if 20 percent of the single occupant vehicles could be reduced during peak hour travel by implementing TDM or TSM measures, would that eliminate the need for the ring road? It was stated that implementation of these measures would not eliminate the need for the ring road. Implementation of these measures would still leave major segments of the road network operating at 20 to 30 percent over capacity in the year 2025, an unacceptable level. Further, it was explained that the 20 percent reduction from TDM or TSM measures was an aggressive number - a number that assumes a very high participation rate or benefit from the measure. Thus, average ranges of reduction for these measures would be far less, therefore, further driving the need for a ring road.

Mike MacMullen of the USEPA concluded the discussion by stating the Purpose and Need as written was acceptable. He stated that concurrence of Purpose and Need was being granted solely for the Ring Road (a stand-alone project), and was not to be construed as concurrence for the Heart of Illinois Highway.

A short discussion of future actions concluded the MIS agenda item. Paula Green of IDOT suggested that the interagency group consider two concurrence points during the next phase of work. These would include corridor selection and alignment selection.

The second agenda item involved concurrence for the purpose and need, and the alternatives selected for detailed evaluation for the US 67 improvement project between Macomb and Jacksonville. CH2M HILL was requested to make a presentation which included an overview of the purpose and need, and a detailed discussion of the alternative evaluation process.

Mike MacMullen's opening remarks following the presentation challenged the theory that roads are the most important factor in economic choices. He stated that if the primary reason for the expressway is economic development, there may be other ways to attract growth i.e. economic incentives, tax incentives, etc. He noted that the purpose and need concluded with a summary which stated that a two-lane facility would adequately serve the future traffic needs of the area, but would not attract the economic development potential sought for the area and region. Therefore, he suggested that a two-lane facility should be considered further as an alternative to the four-lane expressway. He indicated that he could accept the purpose and need as written, but further detail was required to assess the effects and costs associated with a two-lane facility. Mr. MacMullen concluded that the NEPA requirements would be fairly and equitably served with the inclusion of a two-lane alternative in the EIS evaluation. Representatives from the COE and IDNR concurred with Mike MacMullen position.

Pete Frantz countered Mr. MacMullen remarks with the following comments. Mr. Frantz believes that the state has consistently shown a commitment to the development of a four lane expressway in number studies including Lifelines to the Economy, the US 67 Feasibility Study and, The 1995 Illinois State Transportation Plan. The project is also shown to be a component of the National Highway System. Mr. Frantz pointed out that there is a

MEMORANDUM

Page 3

May 6, 1996

104310.T9.ZZ

perception that a four-lane facility is necessary for economic stability, economic retention and future economic development opportunities.

John Betker asked if intermodal options, such as rail, were viable in the study. Mr. Frantz remarked that water transport was the most prevalent alternative form of transportation in the region. Mr. Frantz and other acknowledged that the regional transportation needs would be best served by highway improvements.

Dennis Johnson, FHWA, acknowledged the discussion to be an unresolved conflict that required further examination by IDOT. It was suggested that IDOT consider the issue further with appropriate people within the IDOT organization. Following IDOT's internal discussions, they were requested to appraise the interagency group of their approach for conflict resolution.

The interagency group concurred with the alternatives recommended for further study. They agreed that the corridors would be acceptable regardless of the highway type considered.

Sign-In Sheet
NEPA/404 MERGER MEETING
April 30, 1996

Name	Organization	Telephone No.	Fax No.
PETE FRANTZ	IDOT - Environment Spfld	217 782 4770	217 524 9356
CINDY PARKER	IDOT - BDE - Spfld.	217-785-2833	217-524-9356
KATHY AMES	IDOT - BDE - Spfld.	217-785-0203	217-524-9356
MIKE MACMULLEN	USEPA - Chicago	312-886-7342	312-353-5344
DENNIS JOHNSON	FHWA	217-492-4622	217-492-4628
Walter Waidelich	FHWA	217-492-4622	217-492-4628
Keith Hoernschmeyer	FHWA	217-492-4620	217-492-4621
DAVID KASTENDICK	IDOT D-G STUDIES+PLANS	217 782-5503	217 524-7696
JOHN BETKER	CORPS - ROCK ISLAND	(309) 794-5380	794-5191
Charles H. Perino	IDOT - BDE - Spfld	(217) 785-2130	
Steve HAMER	IDNR	217-785-5500	785-6040
PAULA GREEN	IDOT - DIST 4	(309) 671-3478	(309) 671-3478
Annette Mills	IDOT - DIST 4	309 671-3490	309 671-3498
JOHN BOYLE	CH2M HILL (PEORIA)	309-671-3859	309-671-3816
LARRY MARTIN	CH2M HILL	312-693-3809	312-693-2396
JIM SAACK	CH2M HILL	312-693-3809	312-693-2396
GARY McCONKEY	IDOT - DIST 4	309-671-3485	309-671-3498
OMER OSMAN	IDOT DIST. 4	309-671-3478	309-671-3498
Wendy Lewis	IDOT - DISTRICT 4	309-671-3478	309-671-3498
Barbara Stevens	IDOT - BDE & E	217,785,4245	217.524.9356
Michael Bruns	IDOT - BDE & E	(217) 782-7077	217-524-9356
JEFF FRANTZ	IDOT - DIST 6	217/785-9727	217/524-7696
JOHN TAYLOR	IDOT - DIST 6	217-785-9046	"
MARK G. BURNS	IDOT - DIST 6	217-785-5332	217/524-7696

Sign-In Sheet
NEPA/404 MERGER MEETING
April 30, 1996

[illegible]